

# IOWA BIRD LIFE

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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union was organized at Ames, Iowa, February 28, 1923, for the study and protection of native birds and to promote fraternal relations among Iowa bird students.

The central design of the Union's official seal is the Eastern Goldfinch, designated State Bird of Iowa in 1933.

Publications of the Union: Mimeographed letters, 1923-1928; 'The Bulletin,' 1929-1930; 'Iowa Bird Life,' beginning 1931.

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## IN MEMORIAM: CHARLES REUBEN KEYES

By J. HAROLD ENNIS

Cornell College  
MT. VERNON, IOWA

With the death of Dr. Charles R. Keyes at his home in Mount Vernon, Iowa, on July 23, 1951, Iowa ornithology lost one of its most distinguished scholars and long-time friends. He was a charter member of both the Iowa Ornithologists' Union and the earlier organization, the Iowa Ornithological Association. Less generally known, perhaps, is the fact that he served as a vice-president of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club in 1902, and as secretary for the first half of 1903. His association with the Cooper Club came during his early teaching experience at the University of California.

Earlier he had helped organize in Iowa the first formal state-wide society devoted to the study of birds, and served as that premier organization's second president. It was during his presidency that the first Annual Congress

of the Iowa Ornithological Association was held in Iowa City, August 22-23, 1895. The following year the Second Congress met, July 29-31, in Mount Vernon, also under Dr. Keyes' leadership. Fifty years later, in 1946, the Iowa ornithologists again met in Mount Vernon, and Dr. Keyes appeared on the program with his lecture and slides on the Great Horned Owl.

Dr. Keyes was thoroughly trained as a philologist, and for 38 years taught German at his undergraduate *alma mater*, Cornell College. Two hobbies, archaeology and ornithology, seriously engaged his attention during most of his life. The former interest led to his appointment in 1921 as Director of the Iowa Archaeological Survey. His spare time until his teaching retirement in 1941, and his full time after the latter date, were given over largely to a study of prehistoric man in Iowa. During all his adult life, however, he continued to record his observations of bird life. His notes on eastern Iowa birds cover a greater span of time than those of any other



DR. CHARLES R. KEYES

person in this area to date. In fact, it is probable that only one other individual, his friend, the late Dr. T. C. Stephens, could rival the number of years covered in his bird notes for the entire State.

Readers of "Iowa Bird Life" are already familiar with Dr. Keyes' work and personality. (See Iowa Bird Life, Vol. I, No. 1, March 1931, pp. 8-9, and Vol. XIV, No. 4, Dec. 1944, pp. 72-74.) Those who had the pleasure of knowing him will always remember his quiet charm, his scholarly discussion of archaeological and ornithological topics, and his lively interest in the world of nature about him. The writer could cite many illustrations of this last point because so much of his own stock of "nature lore" came through the tutelage of Dr. Keyes.

Iowa will long remember Dr. Keyes as one of its most useful conservationists. Not only was he interested in preserving some of the ancient Indian mounds, but he was one of the early advocates of an Iowa system of state parks. His interest in public education on these matters may be seen in the fact that he lectured at virtually every session of the old Wildlife School at McGregor, Iowa. His advocacy of Federal preservation of archaeological sites in Iowa found tangible results in the recent creation of the Effigy Mounds National Monument. In view of these interests it was highly appropriate that his ashes were scattered in nearby Palisades-Kepler State Park, whose Indian rock shelters, trees, wild flowers, and birds were so familiar to him.

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## THE 1951 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS IN IOWA

Compiled by FRED J. PIERCE

December was a cold month in Iowa, and Christmas week was severely cold with considerable snow over the state. Unfavorable weather did not deter Iowa bird students from going into the field for the annual bird count, and a larger number than ever participated — 105 observers at 21 stations.

In the limited space available we are unable to comment on the many fine bird records. A careful study of the tabulation will be found very interesting, as it gives an accurate cross-section of winter bird life in Iowa. Downy Woodpecker, Crow and Chickadee were the only birds seen at every station, but these species were seen at every station except one: Hairy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, White-breasted Nuthatch, Starling, English Sparrow, Cardinal, Slate-colored Junco, Tree Sparrow. Fifteen species were listed from one station only, and eight species from two stations only.

We put all the Meadowlarks under one head. Those seen in western Iowa are Western Meadowlarks without question, but in eastern Iowa it is difficult to say whether we have the Eastern or Western in winter, for the Western often ranges nearly to the eastern border of the state.

Data on place, time, weather and the observers who reported in the 1951 census are given below.

1. BACKBONE STATE PARK (Delaware County): Dec. 23; 8:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Clear; 8 in. snow on the level; brisk NW wind; temp. 5° at start, zero at return; 4 miles on foot, 69 by car; trip included an auto ride from Winthrop to the park and return by different road and a trip south of Winthrop in the late afternoon; all roadside birds included in the census. Observers together most of the time. M. L. Jones, Paul Pierce, F. J. Pierce.

2. CEDAR FALLS (Snag Creek, Union Bridge, Hartman Reserve, Josh Higgins Park; river bottoms 50%, upland forest 20%, savannas 20%, fields 10%): Dec. 24; 8 a.m. to 12, 1 to 4:30 p.m. Cloudy; 12 in. snow on ground; rivers mostly frozen over; wind W, 10 m.p.h.; snowing in p.m.; temp. -2° to 9°; total hours, 6 on foot, 1½ by car; total miles, 15 on foot, 45 by car. Observers together. Martin L. Grant, Russell Hays.

3. CEDAR RAPIDS (Cedar Lake, McLeod's Run, Ellis Park, Manhattan, lower River Road, Amana Lake, Willis farm, and roadsides): Dec. 30; 8 a.m. to 12, 1:30 to 5 p.m. Clear; wind SE; temp. 25°; 12 miles on foot, 75 by car. Observers in two groups. John Barlow, Dorothy Brunner, Margaret Lahr, Dr. Alfred Meyer, Ruth Purdy, Rose Richards, Lillian Serbousek, Myra Willis.

4. DAVENPORT (Lock 14 at Hampton, Ill., Seer's Dam on Rock River at Milan, Ill., Credit Island on Iowa side of Mississippi; open farmland 50%, deciduous woodland 25%, river shoreline 25%): Dec. 23; 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear; 10 in. snow on ground; wind shifting, N to NW, 5-20 m.p.h.; temp. 12° to 18°; 10 miles on foot, 75 by car. Observers in two groups, Norwood Hazard, Bud Johnson, Elton Fawks, Peter Petersen, David Fawks, Roger Fox, Donald Johnston.

5. DES MOINES (Waterworks, Glendale Cemetery, Crocker Woods, Morningstar, Wakonsa, Birdland, Pine Hill Cemetery, Dove Woods, Fisher's Lake, Parker Woods, Sycamore Park, Impounding Reservoir, Walnut Woods, Ashworth Park; open fields 25%, wooded streams 60%, lakeside 15%): Dec. 29; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear; 6 to 10 in. snow on ground; some open water, but mostly frozen; wind, S, 10-15 m.p.h.; temp. 30° to 39°; total party hours, 30 on foot, 5½ by car; total party miles, 37 on foot, 64 by car. Observers in five parties. Dorothy Anderson, A. C. Berkowitz, Woodward Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Jas. H. Decker, Dick Hanson, Mr. and Mrs. Lester Haskell, Mrs. Schuyler Hunter, Olivia McCabe, Mrs. Harold Peasley, Mrs. Tom Pettit, Irene Smith, Mrs. Toni Wendelburg, Lynn Willcockson.

6. DUBUQUE (Linwood and Mt. Calvary Cemeteries, Eagle Point Park, City Island, Mississippi River sloughs in Wisconsin; open fields 10%, coniferous woodlands 15%, deciduous woodlands 40%, river sloughs 35%): Dec. 23; 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Cloudy, then clearing by 9 a.m. with bright sunshine; 10 in. snow on ground; river frozen; no wind; temp. 9° to 15° to 5°; total hours, 7 on foot, ½ by car; total miles, 9 on foot, 3 by car. Observers together. Clifford Johnson, Ival Schuster, Mr. and Mrs. George Crossley, Janet Birch, David Reed, R. K. Lampe, Lois Lampe (Dubuque Audubon Club).

7. HARPERS FERRY (7½-mile radius including east part of Yellow River Forest Reserve, Hart coniferous timber reserve, Waukon Junction, Govt. Lock & Dam No. 9; deciduous timber 25%, coniferous timber 5%, overflow bottom covered with weeds and brush 40%, pasture 20%, unharvested cornfields 10%): Dec. 30; 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Clear; 8-12 in. snow on ground; no open water except just below locks; wind NNE to NW, 5-12 m.p.h.; temp. 20° to 30°; total hours, 4½ on foot, 4 by car; total miles, 5½ on foot, 45 by car. Observers together. Arthur J. Palas, Fritz R. Palas.

The White-crowned Sparrow was carefully observed at close range in good light by both observers. It was at the base of a tree where there was little snow, and it would not let any Tree Sparrows or Juncos come into this chosen spot.

8. INDIANOLA (to Lake Aquabi; an auto drive): Dec. 25; 2 to 4:30 p.m. Cloudy; light wind; temp. 20°; 15 miles by car. Mr. and Mrs. Paul Leaverton.

The numbers of birds seen were not given on this census—just the species were checked. We are using the "x" sign in our tabulation.—Ed.

9. IOWA CITY (City Park and river bottoms near by, Lake MacBride, Swan Lake marsh; open farmland 40%, deciduous woodland 45%, coniferous woodland 10%, marsh 5%): Dec. 29; 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Light overcast to clear; 8-12 in. lightly-crusted snow on ground; water frozen except below dams; wind SE, 0-2 m.p.h.; temp. 25° to 38°; total party hours, 10½ on foot, 5 by car; total party miles, 15 on foot, 60 by car. Observers in two parties. Tom Kent, F. W. Kent, Norwood Hazard, Dick Schaefer, Dr. and Mrs. P. P. Laude, Dr. and Mrs. Max Pepernik, Paul Ver Veis.

9a. IOWA CITY TO GREENFIELD. Dr. and Mrs. P. P. Laude drove from Iowa City to Greenfield during a Christmas vacation. On the trip of 180 miles, they drove leisurely, taking time to count the birds which could be seen from the car, and occasionally stopping to count flocks; at times the birds were estimated conservatively when it was impossible to count them. On the

(Continued on page 8)



## CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS

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1. Blackburne Park	2. Cedar Falls	3. Cedar Rospuds	4. Davenport	5. Des Moines	6. Dubuque	7. Fort Dodge	8. Indianola	9. Iowa City	10. Lamont	11. Leekes Park	12. McVernon	13. New Providence	14. Newton	15. Ottumwa	16. Sibley	17. Sioux City	18. Tama	19. Thor	20. Woodward	21. D. Jefferson	
Chickadee	1	4	45	53	32	185	25	22	x	89	11	66	22	46	10	50	11	43	18	10	25
Tufted Titmouse									1	x	24	5	6	6	4	6	1	1	1	1	
White-breasted Nuthatch									4	x	35	3	9	7	21		3	59	9	4	12
Red-breasted Nuthatch																		14*	2		
Brown Creeper																		1	1		6
Brown Thrasher																		48	1		
Rolin																					
Golden-crowned Kinglet																					
Cedar Waxwing																					
Starling	25	12	.96	303	1.85	2	30	3		48	16	18	24	2	17	50	20	98	50	32	8
English Sparrow																		200	45	60	36
Meadowlark																		15	37		13
Red-winged Blackbird																		2			3
Rusty Blackbird																					
Bronzed Grackle																					
Cardinal	9	40	25	29	153	8	17	x			74	2	8	9	10	1	1	12	1	83	12
Purple Finch																		1	1	1	1
Pine Siskin																		77	4	4	4
Goldfinch																		4	34	54	30
Slate-colored Junco																		15	31	54	12
Tree Sparrow																		10	31	30	52
Chipping Sparrow																		15	35	36	50
Harris' Sparrow																		13	30	36	100
White-crowned Sparrow																					
White-throated Sparrow																					
Song Sparrow																					
Lakeland Longspur																					
Number of Species	25	27	34	36	22	19	18	36	19	24	21	22	19	20	18	35	21	16	28	22	
Number of Observers	3	2	8	7	15	8	2	9	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	32	1	1	1	1	1

\* See data under station in body of article.  
Total Iowa list ..... 65 species.

trip to Greenfield the following species were seen: Red-tailed Hawk, 3; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Ring-necked Pheasant, 12; Red-headed Woodpecker, 1; Horned Lark, 340; Crow, 38; Slate-colored Junco, 43; Tree Sparrow, 8. On the return trip, Greenfield to Iowa City, Dec. 27, the following birds were counted: Red-tailed Hawk, 4; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Ring-necked Pheasant, 1; Horned Lark, 231; Blue Jay, 1; Crow, 35; Meadowlark, 18; Cardinal, 8; Slate-colored Junco, 121; Tree Sparrow, 77. The route of the trip was Iowa City to Wellman, Wellman to Oskaloosa, Oskaloosa to Indianola, Indianola to Greenfield; return trip: Greenfield to Winterset, Winterset to Knoxville, Knoxville to Oskaloosa, Oskaloosa to Sigourney, Sigourney to Amana, Amana to Iowa City. (Dr. Laude gave the census for each of the 11 sections of the trip, but these are omitted because of lack of space.—Ed.)

10. LAMONI (South Woods, down Big Creek): Dec. 28; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Snow on ground; temp. 36° at start, 38° at return. Mrs. W. C. DeLong.

11. LEDGES STATE PARK (Boone County): Dec. 21; 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Clear; 8 in. snow on level, loose snow drifting severely all day; wind, 30 m.p.h.; temp. -10° at start, 4° high for the day; 4 miles on foot, 40 by car. Hiked through the Ledges valley and into Des Moines River bottom lands; roadside birds observed on uplands from Ledges through Luther, Jordan and north to Boone County line. M. L. Jones.

The Pileated Woodpecker was observed at 75 feet; it was previously observed and heard in the Ledges through November and December, 1951 (past records of the late Carl Fritz Henning did not include this species in the Ledges region).

12. MOUNT VERNON (12-mile radius of city, including old golf course, Muskrat Slough, Ivanhoe, Dark Hollow in Palisades-Kepler State Park): Dec. 29; 8 a.m. to 1, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Wind, S, SW, 8-12 m.p.h.; temp. 30°-36°. J. Harold Ennis.

The five Rusty Blackbirds were well observed by 7x binoculars; this was the first time this observer has recorded the Rusty during the winter. One of the individuals was again seen in the same area on January 2, 1952.

13. NEW PROVIDENCE (general vicinity of Honey Creek, along about 4 miles of its length; deciduous woodland 60%, open farmland 35%, farmsteads, evergreen groves and yards 5%): Dec. 28; 8 a.m. to 12, 1:30 to 5 p.m. Clear; 10 in. snow on ground; streams frozen; wind SW, 0-5 m.p.h.; temp. 21°-26°; 9 miles on foot, 2 by car. Philip Clampitt.

14. NEWTON (same area as covered in previous years): Dec. 30; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Overcast; 2-4 in. new snow on ground; streams frozen; wind W, 1 to 5 m.p.h.; temp 23° to 20°; total party hours, 8 on foot, 1 by car; total party miles, 13 on foot, 5 by car. Observers together. John Paul Moore, James O'Brien, Wm. Rees, Lyle Tyler, Jr., Mass Yoshinaga (Newton Bird and Nature Club).

15. OTTUMWA (Hamilton Park, roads N, NE of city, Community Gardens, etc.): Dec. 30; 10 am., to 1:30, 2:30 to 4 p.m. Partly cloudy at start, foggy and light rain at finish; very mild east wind; temp. 35°; 2 miles on foot, 5 by car. Charles C. Ayres, Jr., Charles Worley.

The Lapland Longspurs were observed from car; they were in a plowed field in the company of Horned Larks. There were some puddles of water in the road, and after the observers had sat there for some time the Longspurs came to within 15 feet of the car and were observed very nicely.

16. SIBLEY (city, country roads, fields, pastures in general area): Dec. 23; 11 a.m. to 12, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Clear; 5 in. snow on ground; NW breeze; temp. 4°; 2 miles on foot, 80 by car. H. B. and C. S. Fitzsimmons.

17. SIOUX CITY (15-mile diameter; deciduous area 40%, coniferous cemetery and park areas 5%, river, marsh and lake country 30%, open country 15%, city and suburban area 10%): Dec. 30; 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Clear to

lightly overcast; 7 in. snow on ground; lakes frozen, springs flowing in Stone Park, Big Sioux River open south of gas plant, Missouri River mostly frozen; wind SE, 5 to 10 m.p.h.; temp. 26° to 40°; total party hours, 35 on foot, 20 by car; total party miles, 26 on foot, 317 by car. Thirty-two observers in 15 parties. Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Barrett, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Cline, Phil Cline, Mr. and Mrs. P. B. Davison, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Edwards, Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Emery, Carl Fritzsche, Karl Kuhlmann, Zell Lee, Lois Little, Mr. and Mrs. Milton Lory, Geo. Marsh, Geanette Marsh, Bob Jensen, John Rath, Mrs. R. F. Remer, Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Schatz, Alan Schatz, Dr. and Mrs. J. L. Schott, Bob Nickolson, L. J. Nickolson, Eugene Walding, Gertrude Weaver, Carl Wellhausen (Sioux City Bird Club).

An "invasion" by the Red-breasted Nuthatch definitely took place in the Sioux City area. Several bird students saw them from the early part of November, up until the time of the bird census, when 14 were seen. Six Harris's Sparrows were recorded by Schatz on the census.

18. TAMA (city, and driving through Indian reservation): Dec. 29; 4 hours. Clear; no wind; temp. about 32°; 30 miles by car. Mrs. W. G. MacMartin.

19. THOR (Carter feeding station, fields, railway right-of-ways, drainage ditches, roadsides and farm groves in eastern Humboldt County; woods and fields along East Des Moines River in vicinity of Foster's Bridge): Dec. 30; 8:30 a.m. to 11, 1 to 4 p.m. Clear to partly cloudy; 6 in. crusted snow on ground; drainage ditches and river open in a few places; light SE wind; temp. 28° at start, 38° at 1 p.m., 34° at finish; total hours, 3½ on foot, 1½ by car; total miles, 4 on foot, 36 by car. Dennis Carter.

20. WOODWARD (country roadside, open fields along brushy ravines and timber): Dec. 25; 12 m. to 3 p.m. Clear; 8 in. snow on ground; wind NW, 3 m.p.h.; temp. 21°-24°; 2 miles on foot. Richard A. Guthrie.

21. JEFFERSON, SOUTH DAKOTA (Union County; 15-mile diameter from McCook Lake west to Island schoolhouse and Missouri River, Loblolly and Goodenough Lake marshes, east to Big Sioux River; marsh area 20%, timberland 50%, open country 15%, river country 15%): Dec. 23; 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear or lightly overcast; 5 in. snow on ground; Missouri River open in spots, lakes and marshes frozen; wind NW, 6 to 10 m.p.h.; temp. zero; 4 hours on foot, 3 by car; 4 miles on foot, 24 by car. W. R. Felton, Jr.

## ADDITIONAL FALL MIGRATION DATES FROM THE SIOUX CITY REGION

By WILLIAM YOUNGWORTH  
SIOUX CITY, IOWA

The writer published his original fall departure dates list in the December, 1932, "Iowa Bird Life", and favorable comment was elicited from a number of readers. The late Walter M. Rosene, Sr., was the most emphatic in his expressions and asked me to keep up the records, as a source of future information for anyone writing a Birds of Iowa. I have faithfully followed the behest of Mr. Rosene for the past 18 years and feel that these records should be put in print in a permanent form. I also have complete spring arrival records for nearly 30 years, and these should also be published some day.

The present list includes dates only on those species in which the fall departure date was extended, and on a few species which had not been printed in the first list. During the interval between the two lists, several species included on the summer-resident list are now placed on the resident list. This can either be laid to inadequate field work on the part of this observer in the earlier years, or it could be that with mechanical farming the waste of grain makes a larger supply of food available to some of these hardier birds. It

would appear that with a larger number of passerine birds wintering, the variety and numbers of birds of prey have also increased, as will be shown by the list. I have found the following species as resident the year round in small numbers: Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, Marsh and Sparrow Hawks, Prairie Falcon, Mourning Dove, Red-headed Woodpecker, Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Rusty Blackbird, Bronzed Grackle, Bluebird and Robin.

In going over the 1932 list, I found an error in the record of the Orchard Oriole, which should have read Baltimore Oriole, September 18, 1928; a record of the Orchard Oriole on that late date would have been an exceptional record indeed.

In passing I would like to point out the fall season of 1946 as one of the most unusual on my record sheets, and the one in which most of the departure records were broken. A brief statement as to the weather conditions that fall is given in an article in the December, 1946, issue of "Iowa Bird Life."

The writer feels that any unusual record is worthy of publication, if only to get comparisons with bird watchers in other parts of Iowa. For that reason I am giving one early arrival of a migrant. This is a record of a Solitary Sandpiper I listed on August 2, 1950. This is nearly 10 days earlier than any previous fall arrival date for this species.

#### SUMMER RESIDENTS

Great Blue Heron, Nov. 21, 1937.  
 Killdeer, Nov. 11, 1949.  
 Chimney Swift, Oct. 18, 1949.  
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Oct. 1, 1938.  
 Arkansas Kingbird, Sept. 11, 1946.  
 Crested Flycatcher, Sept. 17, 1950.  
 Yellow-headed Blackbird, Oct. 19, 1947.  
 Baltimore Oriole, Sept. 27, 1933.  
 Orchard Oriole, Aug. 23, 1950.  
 Pine Siskin, Oct. 31, 1948.  
 Vesper Sparrow, Oct. 28, 1946.  
 Chipping Sparrow, Oct. 24, 1943.  
 Indigo Bunting, Oct. 5, 1946.  
 Dickcissel, Sept. 17, 1939.  
 Scarlet Tanager, Oct. 7, 1946.

Purple Martin, Oct. 5, 1946.  
 Cliff Swallow, Oct. 1, 1946.  
 Barn Swallow, Oct. 18, 1950.  
 Tree Swallow, Oct. 9, 1946.  
 Bank Swallow, Oct. 8, 1946.  
 Rough-winged Swallow, Sept. 25, 1946.  
 House Wren, Oct. 11, 1949.  
 Catbird, Oct. 6, 1946.  
 Red-eyed Vireo, Sept. 19, 1947.  
 Warbling Vireo, Sept. 26, 1948.  
 Yellow-throated Vireo, Sept. 13, 1942.  
 Bell's Vireo, Sept. 16, 1946.  
 Yellow Warbler, Sept. 26, 1946.  
 Redstart, Sept. 7, 1949.

#### TRANSIENTS OR MIGRANTS

White Pelican, Oct. 6, 1946.  
 Double-crested Cormorant, Oct. 4, 1938.  
 Canada Goose, Nov. 28, 1948.  
 Osprey, Sept. 15, 1935.  
 Swainson Hawk, Sept. 26, 1946.  
 Duck Hawk, Sept. 26, 1945.  
 Golden Eagle, Oct. 25, 1946.  
 Wilson's Snipe, Nov. 17, 1948.  
 Golden Plover, Nov. 19, 1944.  
 Ring-billed Gull, Dec. 2, 1949.  
 Franklin Gull, Nov. 11, 1949.  
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Oct. 9, 1929.  
 Leconte's Sparrow, Nov. 12, 1948

White-crowned Sparrow, Oct. 26, 1949.  
 Clay-colored Sparrow, Oct. 17, 1939.  
 Arctic Towhee, Nov. 5, 1939.  
 Orange-crowned Warbler, Oct. 22, 1949.  
 Tennessee Warbler, Sept. 23, 1949.  
 Myrtle Warbler, Nov. 5, 1950.  
 Mourning Warbler, Nov. 19, 1944.  
 Wilson Warbler, Sept. 16, 1950.  
 Golden-crowned Kinglet, Dec. 31, 1946.  
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Oct. 31, 1950.  
 Olive-backed Thrush, Sept. 19, 1946.

## SPRING CONVENTION AT CEDAR RAPIDS, MAY 10-11

Two full days of programs and field trips have been planned by the Cedar Rapids Bird Club for the 30th annual meeting of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. Dates for the meeting are Saturday and Sunday, May 10 and 11. The Coe College campus will be the meeting place with Hickok Hall and the new Sinclair Memorial Chapel to be used for the main events. The Union is meeting on the Coe campus as part of the centennial celebration of the college. During the centennial year learned societies in many fields are being entertained on the campus.

Complete information as to hotels, motels and the printed program of the convention will be mailed to all members early in April.

At this writing, Saturday's activities will include registration at Hickok Hall starting at 9:30 a.m., followed by a varied program of papers, slides and movies which will be concluded at 3:30 for a business meeting. There also will be book and art exhibits. Saturday evening, the annual banquet will be held at Voorhees Hall, Coe College, followed by a program entitled "Adventures in Color With American Birds and Big Game" by Cleveland Grant.

Sunday morning field trips will go to a variety of habitats, leaving at 5 a.m. The luncheon and compilation meeting will be held at Hawkeye Downs at 1:30 p.m.

Dr. Robert F. Vane is chairman of the local arrangements committee, assisted by Dr. Alfred W. Meyer, Miss Lillian Serbousek and Mrs. Robert Vane. Dr. Peter Laude of Iowa City has arranged the program.

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### GENERAL NOTES

**Barn Owl and Other Records.**—As I close my bird records for 1951, I would like to mention a few items of interest for this vicinity. Probably my best record is that of the Barn Owls found in the top of a silo near Dougherty, only a few miles from us. I had a chance to see the baby owls and take snapshots of them; one picture was printed in the Des Moines Sunday "Register". I saw a Turkey Vulture flying over on May 9. A little Sora Rail was still among the weeds along the creek bank on October 14. The wet spring brought many shore birds to our fields where water stood for some time. The fall warbler migration was especially interesting.—PEARL KNOOP, Marble Rock, Iowa.

**The Effect of Weather and Food on Fall Bird Migration.**—During the fall of 1951, a series of field trips were made in the Ames region from September 28 to November 26; or until a relatively stable population of winter birds had been determined. Spaced at approximately four-day intervals, each trip of three hours duration was designed to obtain a fair sample count of the species and their relative numbers in the vicinity. Care was taken to observe food supplies, feeding habits of the birds, and weather conditions during each trip.

Apparently each new storm or cold wave sent south some species present in the area, and new ones from the north to replace them. For example, the cold spell of October 8 sent the first Palm Warblers and Winter Wrens into the area. The same storm brought juncos, Harris's Sparrows, and kinglets of both species southward, as well as pushed several of our summer residents, such as the House Wren, to warmer climes. The freezing weather of October 26-27 sent most of the migrant sparrows, as well as the Bluebirds and grackles, from the vicinity of Ames.

Some Mourning Doves remained to the last day of observation in a large hemp patch of 30-40 acres located in pastured, creek bottom-land.

The few stragglers remaining after the storm preceding October 29 were seen only near the hemp, on which they were seen feeding often. Goldfinches congregated in a great flock and fed in the same hemp patch. Just after a mild storm, preceding November 9, they disappeared suddenly, although about 30 percent of the hemp seed remained on the stalks. Hence, it appears that the hemp attracted and held the migratory doves and Goldfinches until more severe weather came, which may have encouraged their southward movement.—PAUL D. KLINE, Ames, Iowa.

**Notes on the Prairie Marsh Wren at Swan Lake in 1951.**—In "Iowa Bird Life" of Sept. 1949 Dr. Robert Vane posed the question, "What happens to the Prairie Marsh Wren between May and July?" and he added my name to the same question. Now I am asking it again. During that year he spent much time at Swan Lake so was quite qualified to ask the question. In 1951 I went there many times. Tom Kent spent much of July at the marsh and made a study of Least Bitterns and some other birds. From our observations the presence of the marsh wren followed the same pattern as reported by Dr. Vane in 1949.

Our records for 1951 list it as seen in the last week of April and the first two weeks of May. It again appears in the last three weeks of July, all during August, and in September. Between June 17 and August 8 Tom made 22 trips around Swan Lake in waders so these records represent a rather complete coverage of the territory. These dates are taken from his notes.

July 22, a wren building a nest.

July 25, 8 nests: 6 empty, 1 with 5 eggs, 1 with 1 egg.

July 28, the last one above now with 5 eggs.

Aug. 3, 4, 7, 8, photographs taken from blinds set up at two different nests where birds were carrying food to the nest.

A total of 12 nests were found but only 4 of them with eggs.



PRAIRIE MARSH WRENS AT NEST

Left view, carrying dragon-fly to feed young. Right, female with insect food. Reprinted from "Wilson Bulletin."



MARSH WRENS AT NEST  
Reprinted from "Wilson Bulletin".

From Tom's notes I quote the following observations: "I set up blinds at two of the nests and photographed both on several occasions. The females seemed to be doing all the incubating and feeding the young in both cases, and were quite tame and easy to photograph. On one occasion, with young in the nest, the bird would return to the nest with food and before she would enter the nest I would take her picture. But before she could enter the nest I would flush her away as I got out of the blind to re-set the camera. She would return as soon as I got back into the blind, so I would carry on the same procedure again and again without permitting her to enter the nest. In this way I could shoot a picture a minute until I got tired of shooting (or ran out of film)."

A later survey of the lake on September 16 disclosed about a dozen Prairie Marsh Wrens, perhaps the same families. Several references on this bird give May and June as nesting dates, but at Swan Lake they seem to prefer July and August.—FRED W. KENT, Iowa City, Iowa.

**Bird Notes from Emmet County.**—Do Cedar Waxwings normally feed on the petals of apple blossoms? On May 24 to 27, 1950, a number of these birds stayed in the yard of Fred Wolden at High Lake in Emmet County. It was estimated there were at least 50 birds. Most of the time they were in the apple trees, which were in bloom at that time. They were picking the petals off the blossoms and eating them eagerly. After eating unbelievable quantities they would fly into some taller tree and sit there quietly. The petals on the Wealthy tree were evidently much preferred and the blooms were practically stripped of petals at the end of the period. On the same days another flock was eating petals of a tree of the same variety in a yard in Wallingford, five miles away.

On November 26, 1950, a Tufted Titmouse was seen in our yard. After a few days it began to feed with other birds at our suet-basket and sun-

flower-seed station outside our kitchen window. Through December and January it made numerous visits each day to the station. It also frequented a neighbor's station less than a block away. On January 29 it did not appear and was not seen again. Some time later a shrike was seen killing a Chickadee at the neighbor's station, so perhaps the Titmouse shared the same fate. In March of 1950, a Titmouse came to a station at the home of Fred Wolden at High Lake. This is the most recent previous record of a bird that is rarely seen here.

One of the largest concentrations of Pelicans to remain for some time on local lakes in recent years, arrived on High Lake on September 17, 1951, and remained on waters adjoining the lake for several weeks. Their number was estimated to be at least 700 on some days, but part of them would leave for longer or shorter periods, usually to return again. A number of birds remained as late as October 12.

A Woodcock was flushed from low woods near Ingham Lake on October 12, 1951. It has been some years since any had been reported from this vicinity.—B. O. WOLDEN, Estherville, Iowa.

**A Red-breasted Nuthatch in the Hand.**—The little Red-breast put in an appearance in the Sioux City region last winter, and many of us had rather unusual experiences with the bird, which was fearless and very friendly for a wild creature. On January 6, 1952, I visited Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Barrett, who had two Red-breasted Nuthatches at their feeders all through the winter beginning in November. As I came near, I first heard the voice of one of the nuthatches, and almost at the same time I saw it in a cottonwood near the steps at the front entrance of the Barrett home. I had a jar of melon and squash seeds with me. I opened the jar and immediately the female Red-breast came into my hand, chattering in a most friendly fashion, while she looked over the contents of my gloved hand. I took off the glove and tried again with my bare hand. The nuthatch came to my hand again, and after looking over the seeds, she worked her way up my coat sleeve. She chattered and looked up at me. This provided a thrilling experience, for I could observe all the details of plumage and the manner of movement, etc.—ZELL C. Lee, Sioux City, Iowa.

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#### NECROLOGY

**James R. Sage**, registrar at Iowa State College for more than 30 years, died at his home at Ames, November 13, 1951. He was born at Cardington, Ohio, June 15, 1889. His degrees were a B. A. with a major in engineering from Ohio State University in 1912, and the M. S. in mathematics from Rose Polytechnic Institute in 1915. During 1907-08 he was a rural school teacher in Ohio, and from 1912 to 1915 an instructor in mathematics and physics at Rose Polytechnic Institute. He joined the Iowa State College faculty as instructor in mathematics in 1915, and became an assistant professor in 1919. He married Jessie May Ewing of Emporia, Kansas, August 5, 1915. Although his life was devoted to educational work, Mr. Sage found time for outdoor relaxation. He developed a hobby of photographing flowers in color and enjoyed bird study. He became a member of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union in 1947, and won an honorable mention for a photograph of a Red-breasted Nuthatch in the photo contest at our Davenport convention in 1950.

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#### RECENT BIRD BOOKS

**STALKING BIRDS WITH COLOR CAMERA**, by Arthur A. Allen (National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C., 1951; cloth, 8vo, pp. i-viii+1-328, with 331 colored plates, 93 halftones; price, \$7.50).

This new book is one of the most colorful and attractive publications on

birds in recent years, even surpassing the Geographic's beautiful "Book of Birds" (2 vols., 1939), which, at the time of publication, was considered the finest example of the printer's art. Color photography of birds, which is a comparative infant, has reached an almost unbelievable degree of excellence through the skillful work of Dr. Arthur A. Allen. One wonders what new highs in illustrative technique may be reached in bird books of the future. Probably paintings will be used for purposes of identification, but for sheer beauty and vivid coloring, the bird photographer's work will surely be given preference.

Dr. Allen's reputation as a top-notch bird photographer, gained through many years of photographing in black and white, has been further enhanced by his color work, which has been appearing in the "National Geographic Magazine" for several years. The present book brings together these fine Geographic articles; there are, in addition, 72 colored pictures published for the first time.

Everyone likes to look at pictures. This book will furnish much entertainment, even for those who have only slight interest in birds. The pictures are unusually sharp and unblurred. Most of them are in half-page size and many of them are full-page, with floral accompaniment. The descriptive captions carry much information and are almost independent of the written text. There are 331 color photographs in the book, showing 266 species of North American birds. Of these, 264 are Dr. Allen's work; the remaining 7 were chosen from the best work of other photographers (including one of our members, Mrs. Ross Thornburg, formerly of Des Moines).

Dr. Allen has gone a long way in his ambition to photograph in color as many species of North American birds as possible. Under the sponsorship of the National Geographic Society, which defrayed the cost of some of his longest and most expensive field trips, he has been able to study and photograph birds over much of the United States. The chapter on his expedition to Alaska to find the Bristle-thighed Curlew is a fine adventure story. The outcome almost exceeded his fondest dreams, for members of the party discovered the first nesting of this bird known to science—a species found in 1769 which had been able to keep its nesting a secret until the Allen expedition to Alaska in the summer of 1948. No wonder that Allen's discovery was hailed with two-column heads on the front pages of the nation's great dailies.

Twelve other chapters in the book are equally interesting. Among them are "Birds of Timberline and Tundra", "Duck Hunting with a Color Camera", "Sea Bird Cities of Audubon's Labrador", and "Mexican Detour." These titles only suggest the hours of entertainment and fine ornithological literature that the book affords.

The previous magazine publication having absorbed the high cost of colored plates, the publishers are offering the book at a very modest price. Those who don't add it to their library will be missing one of the finest bird books available at the present time. It is obtainable only from the Geographic Society.—F. J. P.

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BIRDS OF AN IOWA DOORYARD, by Althea R. Sherman. Edited by Fred J. Pierce, and Foreword by Arthur J. Palas (Christopher Publishing House, Boston, Mass., 1952; cloth, 12mo, pp. 1-270, with 2 photographs, and 7 paintings and drawings by the author; price \$3.75).

"A noteworthy contribution to the science of ornithology", the jacket says. And it is a contribution to the philosophy and the practical art of wildlife management. The principles evolved from her intensive, detailed and accurate observations on particularly summer nesting birds of her dooryard are valuable whether one manages song birds or game. More than 25 years

ago Miss Sherman in her direct and vigorous manner condemned the placement of excessive numbers of wren boxes, and the consequent damage to other birds when the favored wrens took over. Thus, singularly free from scientific terms, she calls our attention to limits of "carrying capacity" and "interspecific strife". Elsewhere, "bush-whacking" individuals harm others of their own species, which means "intraspecific strife" that tends to limit numbers of a given species at a given area.

The nesting studies are models to be read with profit and enjoyment by all, whether scientific ornithologists or bird lovers. The author stimulates the reader to look out the window for birds, and to go out into his own doorway to observe and systematically study their ways. To her, that systematic, diligent, prolonged study of birds' habits together with an action program in the balanced increase of species and numbers of birds, was the "love of birds".

The words are easy, except a very few defined in parentheses, such as oologists—"clutchers of eggs". The style is direct, varied enough to flow easily and carry the reader along to paint mind pictures of the scenes and events described. And, several reproductions of the author's excellent drawings and paintings aid the reader at appropriate places. The birds were a part of her home, and of her life. They will become a tying, enjoyable part of your life and of your home as you read the book. And you will learn to start the day with hearing a bird's song and do something for the birds before each day ends. Your years will be long and enjoyed, as were Miss Sherman's.—GEORGE O. HENDRICKSON.

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WILD WINGS, by Frank S. Stuart (McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1952; cloth, 12mc, pp. i-x+1-222; price, \$3.50).

The story of a flock of wild ducks and the dangers which surround them during migration, this book is founded on fact but written as fiction. Mr. Stuart handles his subject both as an informed naturalist and a literary craftsman. It is a swift-moving narrative that all nature lovers and most general readers will enjoy.

The scene opens on a spring morning in the southland, as the wild ducks are beginning their migration. A white Mallard, estranged from his mates because of his color, attaches himself to a flock of Pintails and becomes a challenger to a Pintail drake, who is the leading character in the story. As the ducks fly north the story unfolds into a long series of hazardous experiences for the travelers. The author covers the entire list of dangers and weaves them into the tale with an expert hand. The ducks are buffeted by violent storms and tossed by the sea; they fly blindly through fog, and are caught in an oil film dumped by an ocean liner. They are retarded by a snowstorm, and several of them are buried in a snowbank. One duck is killed by hitting a wire, a falcon strikes at the flock, and they are preyed upon by foxes. The ducks go through a forest fire but are safe in the middle of a northern lake. Mating, nesting, and rearing of the young in their summer home, are taken up in turn. The ducks escape from the lynx, the snowy owl and other predators, but when they are migrating south in the fall, many of them are mowed down by the merciless killer with the shotgun. Drinking of polluted water also takes its toll from the flock.

The white Mallard is in continual contest with the Pintail drake, until the former is killed by flying into a lighthouse—another destroyer of migrating birds. Mr. Stuart writes beautiful prose, and very skillfully carries the reader through his pages, giving an accurate account of the birds' life histories while unobtrusively putting across important lessons in conservation.

At least two other bird books have a similar title—"Wild Wings", by Herbert K. Job (1905), and "Wild Wings", by Joseph J. Murray (1947).—F.J.P.